



The National Sporting Library NEWSLETTER

A RESEARCH CENTER FOR HORSE AND FIELD SPORTS

MIDDLEBURG, VIRGINIA

NUMBER 63

FALL 2001

Inspired Animation: The Art of Wesley Dennis

by Lisa Campbell, Associate Librarian

Misty of Chincoteague, King of the Wind, Justin Morgan Had a Horse, The Red Pony. Those titles convey vivid images of the most memorable horses from your childhood. Those enchanting horses in your mind's eye are the creations of Wesley Dennis.

Inspired Animation: The Art of Wesley Dennis will open on September 21 at the National Sporting Library. Presented by the Forrest E. Mars Sr. Exhibition Series, the showing will feature illustrations from some of the world's best known children's books.

Morgan and Reid Dennis acquired their father's extensive collection of sketches and paintings in 1966 when Wesley passed away. Since then, Morgan has kept the collection safely stored in his home as he served the community as the popular manager of the Middleburg



Courtesy of Emily North Hutchison

Tennis Club. But at the suggestion of NSL patrons Beth and Wayne Gibbens, Morgan has made Wesley's drawings and paintings available for the Library's exhibit as a tribute to his father.

The artistic brilliance of Wesley Dennis (1903-1966) lay in his ability to accurately capture horses, dogs and people in moments of expression and motion. It was the quality of

his work that caught the eye of author Marguerite Henry (1902-1997) when she was searching for the right illustrator for her first book, *Justin Morgan Had a Horse*.

Henry told the *Falmouth Enterprise* in a 1956 interview, "This artist saw beyond hide and hair and bone. You could see that he understood and loved animals, that he was trying to capture their spirit,

Continued on page 2

Open Land for Foxhunting?

The National Sporting Library will host a two-part symposium, "Why Our Countryside Should Be Open for Foxhunting." The symposium is part of the Forrest E. Mars Sr. Lecture Series.

On Friday, October 5, the NSL will present the first installment with James Scharnberg, master of Skycastle French Hounds and a crusader against suburban sprawl in his

Continued on page 8

Cormack to Lecture on George Stubbs

Malcolm Cormack, curator of the Paul Mellon Collection at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, will deliver a lecture on Mellon's collection of George Stubbs' (1724-1806) paintings at the National Sporting Library on Friday, November 2.

His topic will be "Reputation Restored: George Stubbs, Paul Mellon and the Art of the Horse." The lecture will focus on Mellon's in-

fluence on the popularity of Stubbs's equine and sporting art.

"George Stubbs was one of the greatest sporting artists," said Cormack. "But it wasn't until his book *The Anatomy of the Horse* was published in the 1760s that he achieved European fame."

Paul Mellon (1907-1999) was undeniably one of the world's leading art collectors. Because of his love of

Continued on page 7

BOOK SALE BEST EVER

Catalogs have been mailed to NSL members for the 2001 Duplicate Book Sale. For details see page 9.

Inspired Animation

Continued from page 1

personality and expression." Viking Press published the book in 1945, which began over two decades of an enormously successful collaboration. Together, the two published 15 books.

The collaboration of Henry and Dennis on *Misty of Chincoteague* (1947) was so successful that it was recently named to the *New York Times* list of the Top 100 Children's Classics of the 20th century. The demand for the book has remained so strong, the publisher Simon & Schuster recently published a deluxe edition.

"These books seem to be as popular as ever," said Robin Bledsoe, a bookseller in Cambridge, Mass. "One thing that sets them apart is that they are very timeless - the story, the illustrations and the style of writing."

Misty developed a huge following that continues to this day. In the 1960s, the movie version was filmed at Chincoteague Island in Virginia. The annual "Pony Penning" day and auction of ponies at Chincoteague in July now draws over 50,000 visitors from all over the world.

King of the Wind (1948) by Henry and illustrated by Dennis, won the American Library Association's Newbery Medal Honor Award in 1949. Henry wrote the story of how a desert-bred Arabian stallion came to be one of the three important founding sires of today's Thoroughbred racehorse. Dennis's exotic and beautiful paintings and drawings captured the

beauty, energy and speed of that stallion, the Godolphin Arabian.

King of the Wind was dedicated to Samuel Riddle, owner of the famous racehorse Man O' War, and to Dennis's good friend, Melville Church II, then president of The Virginia Horseman's Association.

Wesley and his wife Dorothy first came to Virginia at the invitation of

and Dorothy and their sons to move from New York to Warrenton in 1945.

Once settled in Virginia, Wesley and Dorothy were invited to hunt with Warrenton Hunt and Wesley played polo on local teams. The Dennis's 120-acre farm was soon home to horses, polo ponies, dogs, ducks and a pet crow named Charlie. He even had a pet emu mailed to him from Australia by friend King Stone.

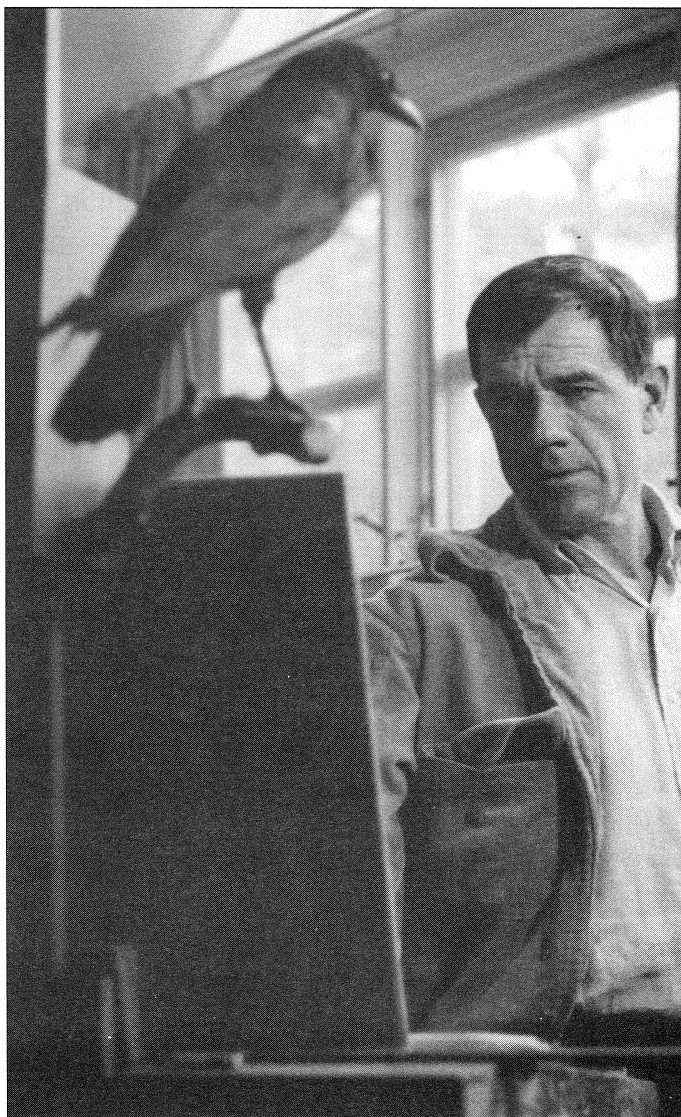
He told the *Fauquier Times-Democrat*, "I probably spend a larger percentage of my income supporting useless pets and animals than anyone else I know."

Dennis and his friends King Stone and Russell Arundel played gin rummy and agreed to pool their winnings to finance a safari trip to Africa. The group eventually made the trip. Dennis and Russell's daughter Jocelyn Arundel gathered enough material to collaborate on a number of books in the early 1960s.

Emily Hutchison has many fond memories of Wesley. She recalled, "He was very energetic. He was completely enthusiastic about everything he did. I still have a number of lovely paintings that he did."

With the publication of *Justin Morgan* in 1945, Dennis was suddenly

in great demand as an illustrator and remained so for the rest of his life. He illustrated, authored or co-authored over 150 books. Over ten million copies have been printed in ten languages. He illustrated calendars for prominent companies like Winchester Ammunition, Christmas



Walter Chrysler of Chrysler Motors and the breeder of fine Thoroughbred racehorses. Chrysler lived in Warrenton. While on this visit, they met Church, his wife Emily Church (now Hutchison), and Russell Arundel, MFH of Warrenton Hunt. All became fast friends and were the ones to convince Wesley

Continued on page 4

Thrill of the Hunt

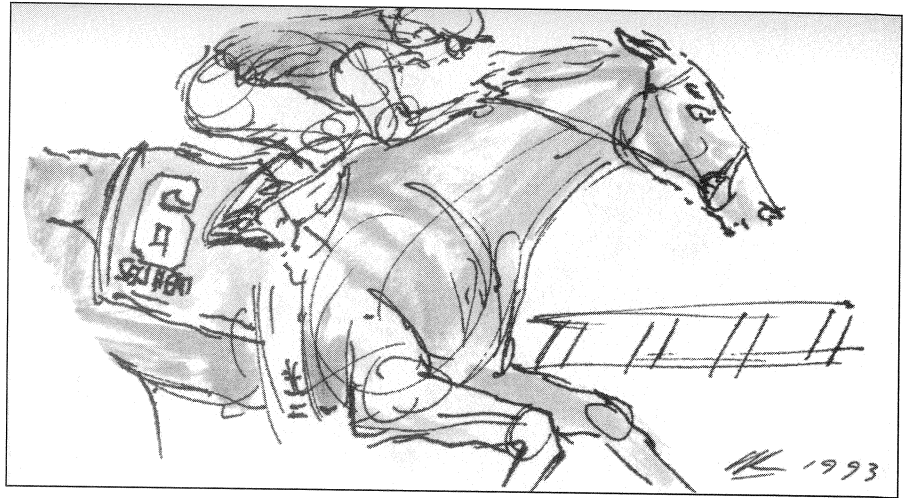
by Rick Stoutamyer, Owner of Undercover Books

What do philanthropist Paul Mellon, Confederate Colonel John Singleton Mosby, and ten-year-old Fauquier County, Virginia, native Kelsie Stoutamyer have in common? All three played significant roles in one of my most memorable book finds. You see I sell used and rare books. Unfortunately, I also have a habit of collecting them. This is a bad habit if you want to make a profit, but I digress.

A couple of years ago an entire album of items associated with Colonel Mosby came up for sale through Pearson Auction Company, and the sale was to take place in the basement of the fire station in Warrenton, Virginia. Don't laugh. Pearson Auctions may not be Sotheby's, but no one in the world had more interesting Virginia Civil War items available for sale on this day. Some of these items were one-of-a-kind Mosby pieces, and they were all being sold as one lot.

So my daughter, Kelsie, and I headed to the auction, I with delusions of grandeur of protecting our Commonwealth's treasures and ensuring this Mosby prize remained steadfastly within the confines of Mosby's Confederacy. Just as bidding for the Mosby lot started, I reached for my checkbook to make a final financial calculation. But I didn't even get it open before bidding rocketed past \$5,000. Clearly this little sale was headed someplace I couldn't go, so I eased my checkbook back from where it had come and watched the fireworks. For those wondering, the good news is the Mosby album went home to a private collection in Fauquier County.

At this point my daughter let it be known she was auctioned out and booked up, and it was time to be any place other than the basement of the



firehouse. As we headed for the door I sneaked a peek in a row of boxes full of books (this is an illness that once you're afflicted, there is no cure). A very small volume with only the words *Sea Hero* on the spine caught my eye. My initial thought was along the lines of Admiral Nelson or John Paul Jones, but then I noticed the book was bound in the colors of Paul Mellon's racing silks. In the hunt for the more elusive books, this is the moment you live for. Your skin tingles, your heart pumps faster and your hair begins to stand on end. (This nerdy business of books is far more fun than the general public realizes.)

Not wanting to draw undue attention to the box, I asked Kelsie to retrieve *Sea Hero* and show it to me. Inside were spectacular full-page, vibrant reproductions of watercolor sketches of *Sea Hero*'s 1993 Kentucky Derby-winning campaign. All of the sketches were by internationally acclaimed artist Lloyd Kelly, who was the subject of a one-man show at the Kentucky Derby Museum among many other honors.

Trying not to run around the firehouse yelling "Jackpot!" and also realizing I had exceeded a young girl's

attention span, I asked Kelsie to return the book to its box and, perhaps, if she felt like playing a game, try to hide it within the box. I then inquired as to when the box lots would go up for sale and was told at least a couple of hours later. Now Kelsie said it was time we turned our focus toward the hunt for some rare Japanese Pokemon cards, so we were off to haunt the hobby and card shops of Warrenton. We returned to the basement of the firehouse in time to buy our box of books for \$35. *Sea Hero* still rested comfortably in Kelsie's hiding place.

Flash forward about a year to the opening of a Lloyd Kelly art exhibition. After being introduced to Mr. Kelly, I handed him my *Sea Hero* book and asked if he would sign it. He clearly had a look of surprise as he took the book from my hand, and he exclaimed, "Where in the world did you get this?" My reply of, "The basement of the fire station in Warrenton," brought an expression of pure amusement to his face. He asked if I knew the history of the book, and as I assured him I did not, he proceeded to narrate in a Paul Harvey style "the rest of the story."

Continued on page 10

cards for United Artists, countless magazine illustrations and advertisements. He was commissioned to paint numerous portraits of horses, dogs and people. He created illustrations for crossword puzzles, cartoon strips, playing cards and place mats for restaurants.

John Steinbeck, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Grapes of Wrath* (1939), called upon Dennis to illustrate his book *The Red Pony* (1948). It too became a classic and was the best seller of any book Dennis illustrated.

The World Publishing Company hired him to illustrate a new edition of the enormously popular *Black Beauty* (1946). The editor writes in the introduction, "Wesley Dennis's love of horses and knowledge of them made him a natural choice as illustrator of this edition of Anna Sewell's most famous book. [She] would have loved his pictures for *Black Beauty's* story. They are so sympathetic and understanding in showing its events and adventures that you seem not only to see what happens to the horse but what he thinks and feels about it."

But Dennis's career was no accident. As a child, he fell deeply in love with horses. Both he and his brother Morgan shared a natural artistic talent. As a youngster, Wesley knew he wanted to live his life as an artist, surrounded by horses and other animals. And he possessed the drive to fulfill his destiny.

Wesley, Morgan and their sister, Lillian, were raised on a farm on the Cape Cod shores of Massachusetts. Henry told the *Falmouth Enterprise* of the event that shaped Dennis's future: "One Saturday afternoon he saw a newsreel in town, and that changed his whole life. Men in white breeches and helmets were whacking a ball as they rode galloping horses. It looked like fun — but the

way he said 'fun' to his mother over the supper table made it a big word shot through with speed, excitement, competition."

He began to dream of a life as an artist and polo player. His mother tried to map his future otherwise, but the restless teen already possessed an active and rather independent mind. Refusing to be tied to a mundane life, he quit high school at the age of 17. Taking drawings, he left home and presented the samples to the art departments of Filine's and Jordan Marsh and Co. He was immediately hired as a fashion artist, then later worked in the advertising department at the *Boston Globe*.

But tiring of commercial art, Dennis took the step to further his career in equestrian art. He wrote to renowned animal and landscape painter Lowes Dalbiac Luard, of France, asking for tutelage. Luard replied that he did not teach but would help him anyway. Dennis quit his job immediately and went to France.

Luard turned out to be a tough taskmaster, grilling Dennis to learn to draw from memory and with accuracy. He took Dennis to local butcher shops since the French included horsemeat on the menu. They spent hours studying the anatomy of horses, especially the muscles — how they were attached and what they were used for.

Thus, combining his love and knowledge of horses—their personalities, their graceful movement, their zest for life—with the finely honed skills from France, Dennis's work stepped into a realm of its own with snapshot accuracy of movement and expression of the animals' physique and personality.

Leaving behind the commercial art world, Dennis staked himself out at the racetracks. He would sketch a winning horse and present it to the excited owner hoping to secure a commission. The strategy often succeeded and he produced a number

of paintings of winning Thoroughbreds.

Knowing that Bing Crosby loved racing, he produced a whole portfolio of drawings and shipped them off hoping Crosby might buy one. Crosby was so impressed by the quality of the work, he bought the whole lot. (Several years later, Dennis visited Crosby and saw all of the drawings on the wall in his bar.)

Then in the early 1940s, Dennis and his new bride, Dorothy Boggs, were vacationing in Santa Fe, New Mexico to gather material for a book idea he called "Brightly of the Grand Canyon." There, he met May Masee, an editor of children's books. It was this chance meeting that put Dennis on the path to success and fame.

Returning East, Dennis approached Masee to see if any of her authors could use an illustrator. Instead she suggested that he write his own book to illustrate. Thus, Dennis's first book *Flip* hit the market in 1941. *Flip* is a beginner-reader story of a frisky colt who wishes to jump a stream like his mother. It was so successful he was asked to do a sequel which he entitled *Flip and the Cows*.

Meanwhile, Marguerite Henry, a young writer, presented a manuscript for publication to publishers Wilcox and Follet. But Henry still needed an illustrator for the book to be entitled *Justin Morgan Had A Horse*. She viewed samples from a few of their illustrators but rejected them as not good enough.

She had hoped for Will James or C.W. Anderson, but neither was available. She went to the local library to browse through children's books for a suitable illustrator. When she came across *Flip*, she knew she had found the right one.

Inspired Animation: The Art of Wesley Dennis will be open through November. For more information, visit the NSL's web site at www.nsl.org or call 540-687-6542.



Directors of The National Sporting Library

102 The Plains Road
Post Office Box 1335
Middleburg, Virginia 20118-1335

OFFICERS

George L. Ohrstrom, Jr.
Chairman

Jacqueline B. Mars
Vice Chair

Kenneth Y. Tomlinson
President

Clarke Ohrstrom
Treasurer

Karen Showalter
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Mimi Abel Smith

Arthur W. Arundel

Donald Calder

James Cummins

John H. Daniels

Edward P. Evans

Diana J. Firestone

Helen K. Groves

Sheila Johnson

Christopher Ohrstrom

F. Turner Reuter, Jr.

B. Francis Saul, II

Joan Irvine Smith

William C. Steinkraus

John von Stade

Don W. Wilson

Peter Winants

THE NATIONAL SPORTING LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

(ISSN 1068-2007)

Number 63, Fall 2001

Published by the
National Sporting Library
Telephone 540-687-6542

<http://www.nsl.org>

Lisa Campbell, *Editor*

Kenneth Tomlinson, *Director*

Robert Weber, *Librarian*

Walta Warren,

Assistant Director/Curator

Francesca Spano, *Public Liaison*

Peter Winants, *Director Emeritus*

Porter Perham Bequeaths *The Sporting Magazine*

Sporting book collector Porter Perham of Rochester, N.Y., a National Sporting Library member, recently announced that he has bequeathed his collection of the entire 157-volume run of *The Sporting Magazine* to the NSL.

Published in London, *The Sporting Magazine* was the premier publication for men and women who enjoyed country sports in the 18th and 19th centuries. Volume one begins with the October 1792 edition and the last volume ends in 1870. Perham's collection includes an index of the authors and engravers compiled at a later date by Sir Walter Gilbey.

"The Perham collection is in wonderful condition," says Richard Hooper, a rare book appraiser in Washington, D.C. "It's an incredible periodical for the period. It is noted for the engravings and articles, and it's a long running periodical."

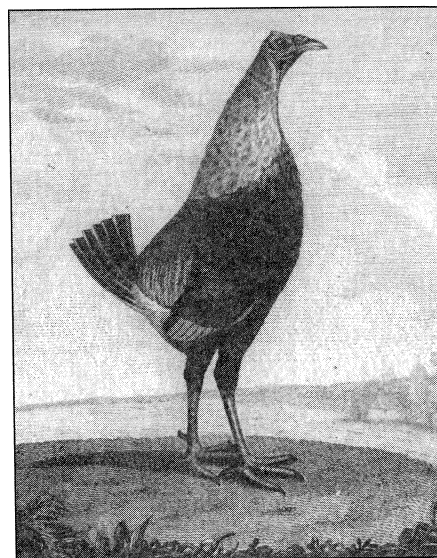
The first issue contains an article "Address to the Public," which begins: "To relieve the mind from the fatiguing studies of the closet, and preserve the human frame from those afflictions which a sedentary life too frequently occasions, recreation and exercise are found to be essential." Still valid after 209 years!

These rare volumes provide a fine overview of 18th- and 19th-century sports and the sporting culture—a priceless resource for researchers of the era. Each issue lists events and contains articles on numerous sports including horseracing, coursing, cock fighting, archery, shooting, game laws and hunting in various parts of the world.

Each volume of Perham's collection is bound in half-calf and green



From *The Sporting Magazine* volume one.



cloth with gilt sporting devices on the spine and contrasting spine labels. The text is sharp and the prose is clear and informal — not always the case with 200-year-old books.

Each month's issue contains engravings, usually on the title page and one inside. Some show a general sporting scene, but most depict specific participants whether they are noteworthy people, racehorses or hounds.

To bequeath such rare and valuable books to the NSL is to give recognition to the importance of the NSL's quest to ensure the future of the culture of turf and field sports.

Discovering the F. Ambrose Clark Rare Book Room

by Robert Weber, Librarian

The National Sporting Library possesses an unmatched rare sporting book collection – one that is the envy of other institutions and the pride of NSL members. With the addition in recent years of the Huth-Lonsdale, Hünersdorf, and Daniels Collections, the Library holds an amazing assortment of rare and valuable sporting literature and artwork.

The books in these collections are both documents and artifacts of spectacular beauty. The artful bindings, tooling, typesetting and illustrations are equaled only by the books' literary, historical and cultural significance. Ranging in date from the early 16th to the mid-20th century and covering subjects from classical equitation to hunting and fishing to boxing, many of these volumes are first editions, some of which even the most respected intellectual institutions in the world do not own.

The Library's strongest collections of rare works are those focusing on classical equitation and veterinary medicine, the crown jewels of which include first editions of several classic works. Called by at least one visitor "the bible of horsemanship," Pluvinel's *L'Instruction du Roy en l'Exercice de Monter à Cheval* (1629) contains more than sixty exquisite engravings and was written for the instruction of young King Louis XIII.

Perhaps just as significant in the literature of horsemanship is William Cavendish, Duke of



From *The Sportsman's Companion*

Newcastle's *Methode et Invention Nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux* (1658). Newcastle wrote this "epitome of all horse books" while exiled in Antwerp during the English Commonwealth. This French translation was limited to only 50 copies and is so rare that not even the British Museum Library owns one.

Other important first editions of this nature are La Gueriniere's *Ecole de Cavalerie* (1733), one of the best 18th-century French horsemanship books containing aspects of flat work still used today, and a signed copy of Lieb's *Practica et Arte di Cavalleria* bound with *Gebißsuch* (1616), two of the rarest German Baroque horsemanship texts.

The NSL also holds a number of "firsts" in these subjects, including

Tacquet's *Philippica* (1613), the first book devoted to horse breeding, Nelli's *Libro de Marchi de Cavalli* (1569), the earliest printed book on horse brands, and Rhenatus's *Artis Veterinariae, Sive Mulomedicinae Libri Quatuor* (1528), the first veterinary medicine book ever printed. Rhenatus is considered the most important of all classical veterinary texts and was based upon a fifth-century Roman work compiled by an author called the "Veterinary Hippocrates."

The Library's rare book collection also contains a number of ancient sporting works on various topics including archery, falconry, fishing and stag hunting. One unusual volume, Mercurialis' *De Arte Gymnastica Libri Sex*

(1573), serves as an early manual of games, wrestling, boxing, swimming, dancing, weightlifting, general exercise, and what is now called "sports medicine." Containing several magnificent woodcuts, this is a first edition of the first illustrated work on gymnastics. And of course, I would be remiss if I did not mention our first edition of Walton's *Compleat Angler* (1653). The rare book room holds nearly a hundred copies of this classic, which has been translated into ten languages and reprinted over 450 times.

One of the characteristics making the aforementioned works significant is their age. Not all of the Library's rare books are quite so old, but they are special nonetheless.

Continued on page 8

BOOK REVIEW

Rycroft of Hounds, Hunting and Country: The Articles and Writing of Sir Newton Rycroft

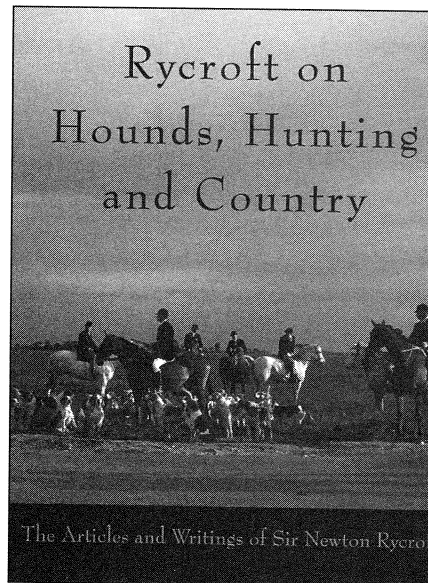
Edited and compiled by James
Scharnberg. The Derrydale Press,
Lanham & New York, 2001. Illus.
210 pp. \$60.00.

Sir Newton Rycroft, who passed away in 1999, was founder and master of the Drummer Beagles (1939 to 1963), and then MFH and huntsman of the New Forest foxhounds (1962 to 1984). Capt. Ian Farquhar, Jt.-MFH and huntsman of the Duke of Beaufort's hounds, writes in a letter to Scharnberg, "I was very fond indeed of Sir Newton and am eternally in his debt for all the advice he gave to me."

James Scharnberg, MBH of Skycastle French Hounds (Pa.), had read every one of Rycroft's articles with relish. Beginning in the 1960s, these articles appeared in *The Field*, *The Shooting Times and Country Magazine*, *Hounds Magazine* and *Hounds*. Scharnberg tried to convince Rycroft to publish the articles in book form but was unsuccessful, so Scharnberg took on the task himself. He arranged the articles by four general topics: "Hounds for a Pack," "Breeders and Breeding," "Hunting and Quarry," and the timely "Conservation and Politics."

Benjamin Hardaway III, MFH of Midland Fox Hounds (Ga.), befriended Rycroft on his trips to England to acquire good hounds for his own breeding program. He writes in the foreword, "Sir Newton possessed a highly trained scientific mind, inquisitive and analytical. He uses it to the benefit of all hound people as he explores the mysteries of breeding and hunting hounds."

With his direct style of writing, Rycroft opens every article with a provocative statement. A piece on



ancient versus modern hound breeds begins with, "I suppose it is inevitable that there will always be someone, somewhere, who will tell us that our hounds and thoroughbreds are not as good now as they were seventy or eighty years ago." He then expounds on interesting facts in modern agriculture practices that may influence how hounds hunt today as opposed to a century ago.

In "Genetics or Coincidence?" Rycroft discusses the coincidences of color and hunting performance in hounds. He cites fascinating statistics throughout the article. Rycroft writes, "Sir Peter Farquhar found and has recorded the fact that the blue descendants of Carmarthen Nimrod '24 had better noses than the non-blue." He makes similar comparisons to World War I cavalry horses with the primitive dorsal

stripe down their backs as having better stamina.

Jim Meads, the brilliant sporting photographer familiar to most foxhunters, provided the majority of the fine photos in Scharnberg's book. Many key masters, huntsmen, hounds and other personalities are pictured, making the book a good reference.

Rycroft's articles are indeed excellent reading for all levels and types of hunting. In addition to foxhunting, he writes about coursing, bloodhounds, Beagles, Bassets and the modern politics of hunting in England. Scharnberg did a service to the hunting community by compiling these fascinating articles. The price of the book may cause some readers to shy away, but it is an insightful and valuable addition to the true hunter's library.

Cormack to Lecture

Continued from page 1

horses and the countryside he collected sporting art which greatly enhanced the popularity of sporting art among collectors. And his collection of George Stubbs paintings is beyond compare.

The lecture on November 2 will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the NSL's Founders Room. To place a reservation, please call 540-687-6542, extn. 15.

There are a number of rare American works valued for their uniqueness, scarcity and desirability. Among them are two more "firsts." One is Seccombe's *Business and Diversion Inoffensive to God, and Necessary for the Comfort and Support of Human Society* (1739), the first American book on fishing, in which the author defends the sport as a pastime morally suitable for Sundays.

The other is a second edition of *The Sportsman's Companion* (1791), the oldest shooting book published in America, of which only five copies are known to exist. Originally published in 1783, the book's author is unknown but is thought to have been a British officer.

Also in our collection is a first edition of Will James's *Smoky, the Cowhorse* (1926), winner of the 1927 Newbery Award. James presented this particular copy to his wife; it was later discovered in a trunk purchased at auction by a Nevada hairdresser. The auctioneer required her to take the trunk's contents, not knowing what treasure lay within it.

Books are not all that we house in the rare book room; we also possess many original manuscripts by some of the most famous sporting authors. These items are by definition one-of-a-kind, making them true treasures. Perhaps the real prize possession in this category is Theodore Roosevelt's 1886 manuscript "Riding to the Hounds on Long Island," which subsequently appeared in *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*. T.R., an avid sportsman as well as future war hero and President, wrote this attacking those attempting to outlaw foxhunting.

Other manuscripts are of a lighter nature, including two by popular author Gordon Grand: *Old Man and Other Colonel Weatherford Stories*

(1934) and *The Horse in His Gracious Majesty's Colony of New Jersey* (1934), both works eventually published by Derrydale Press. We also hold at least ten manuscripts by Edith Somerville, including "A Salute" – the preface to her book *Happy Days* (1946). This is a very poignant piece apparently expressing Somerville's longing for the happy sporting life of pre-war years.

Even a partial list of remaining manuscripts in our collection is indeed impressive: 40 letters from artist Sir Alfred and Violet Munnings to their American patrons William and Charlotte Coxe-Wright; the preface to John Masefield's *Reynard the Fox* (1920), as well as the poem's last four verses; John Taintor Foote's "Look of Eagles" (1916), called by the *New York Times Book Review* "a high example of American short-story art;" an autograph manuscript of Scottish poet Robert Burns's "The Bonie Moor-Hen" (c1788), a lively song about grouse-hunting which is a loosely veiled reference to the marriage of Burns's

friend and correspondent Clarinda to a Glasgow gentleman.

These manuscripts stir the imagination like nothing else. They are pieces of the past which, perhaps more than other documents in the collection, bring the reader into tangible contact with their authors.

Of course, I can highlight only a few of the wonderful items in our collection. Hundreds of others are housed in the F. Ambrose Clark Rare Book Room, where sportsmen of various interests will find a great number of items that will capture the imagination or inspire scholarship. This is the true value of these works: not only are they magnificent artifacts of an ancient and revered culture, but they are also invaluable primary source research material – a characteristic that has come as a pleasant surprise to a number of recent visitors. As these and other visitors to the Library will attest, discovering all that the NSL's rare book collection has to offer is an engrossing, entertaining, and enlightening experience.

Open Land for Foxhunting?

Continued from page 1

native southeast Pennsylvania; Malcolm Commer Jr., University of Maryland livestock economist, who has done numerous studies documenting the economic benefits of foxhunting; and Randolph Rouse, master of the Fairfax Hunt.

The second installment will be next spring on Friday, April 19. British author Robin Page will address the attempt to ban foxhunting in England. Page is the author of *The Hunting Gene* and is a leader of the UK's Countryside Alliance.

"The political assault on foxhunt-

ing in England is insidious," says National Sporting Library President Kenneth Tomlinson. "But we also need to be aware of the importance of preserving the open-space culture for foxhunting here. There is a deceptively important link between foxhunting and the culture that makes this community special."

The lecture on October 5 will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the NSL's Founders' Room. To place a reservation, please call 540-687-6542, extn. 15.

"I don't even like old cars. I'd rather have a horse. A horse is at least human, for God's sake." J.D. Salinger

2001 Duplicate Book Sale Best Ever

The NSL's 2001 Duplicate Book Sale offers the most spectacular selection ever, with over 300 books on hunting, racing, horsemanship, shooting, fishing and sporting art and fiction. Many of these are rare and out of print.

"What makes this sale unique is the number of special books we are able to offer— many for the first (and probably last) time," says Librarian Rob Weber

Perhaps the most noteworthy of books in the catalog is Thomas Henry Taunton's *Portraits of Celebrated Racehorses* (1887). This handsomely bound four-volume set contains 464 black-and-white plates of English racehorses from 1702 to 1870. It was designed "for such of the general community as may desire to know something of those equine celebrities which have figured in the most captivating of all our national pastimes." Bibliophiles say that it is one of the corner pieces of any racing library, but it is rarely found as a complete set.

Along similar lines is the magnificent Derrydale Press book *Cherished Portraits of Thoroughbred Horses* (1929). This is a collection of 86 reproductions of portraits from William Woodward's noted collection. Beautifully bound in full red morocco, and with notes by W. S. Vosburgh, this volume was called by Ernest Gee "the most handsome of all American Sporting Books." Only 279 copies were printed.

Staying with the racing theme, the catalog also offers the first four volumes of the six-volume history of American racing: *Racing in America*. W. S. Vosburgh wrote what came to be Volume III in 1922 as a chronicle of the "revival of racing" in America following the Civil War.

John Hervey later wrote Volume IV in 1937 and Volumes I and II in 1944. Together, these four volumes cover the years 1665-1936. The Vosburgh is reportedly the most rare of the four, fewer copies having been printed.

Fans of British steeplechasing will want to take a look at Charles Richardson's *Racing at Home and Abroad: British Steeplechasing and Racing in Ireland* (1927). This is an impressive-looking book bound in full brown morocco and covers the history of steeplechasing and racing in Britain and Ireland. Profusely illustrated with black-and-white plates, this copy is number 604 of only 700 printed.

One of the more unusual books in the sale is Pierce Egan's two-volume *Real Life in London* (1821). This copy is the first edition of this work in book form; it was originally published in 14 monthly parts. Handsomely bound in full crimson polished calf and containing a good number of wonderful hand-colored plates, *Real Life in London* is a fictitious account of the "rambles and adventures of Bob Tallyho, Esq., and his cousin through the metropolis." The book is actually Egan's parody of his own *Life in London* and has been called "an interesting and useful guide to the social history of the period."

Finally, for the many NSL members who enjoy following the hounds and delving into the history of foxhunting, we offer *The Hunts of the United States and Canada* (1908), by A. Henry Higginson and Julian Ingersol Chamberlain. Higginson helped make the Middleburg and Upperville area famous just a few years earlier during the Great Foxhound Match, during which his

pack of English hounds was out-hunted by Harry Worcester Smith's American hounds. Higginson was a prolific writer on the subject of fox-hunting and remains one of the most remarkable figures in the history of the sport in America. This book includes the history and anecdotes from many hunt clubs, including the Middleburg, Blue Ridge and Orange County Hunts. This copy is number 17 of a mere 100 and is printed on hand-made paper.

"The overall quality of the sale is unmatched by any previous," Weber says. Besides the books highlighted above, members will find a number of books written or illustrated by Lionel Edwards, a healthy choice of works by novelists Robert S. Surtees and Edith Somerville and Martin Ross, a selection of Alexander Mackay-Smith's writings, including the valuable reference work *The Race Horses of America, 1832-1872: The Portraits and other Paintings by Edward Troye*, as well as a wide selection of other books on various sporting subjects.

Catalogs have been mailed to NSL members, and we will be accepting bids postmarked as late as November 2. If you believe you have a current membership at the Library and you do not receive a catalog, please call us to check on your status. If you are not yet a member, you may still submit a valid bid as long as you include a check for membership dues with your bid. (Chairman's Council: \$2,500; Guardian: \$1,000; Sponsor: \$250; Member: \$50)

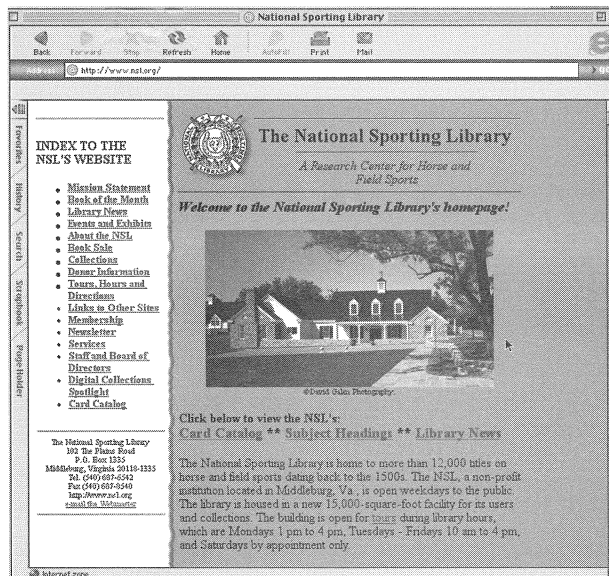
Full results will be mailed to all bidders in mid-November. Books will be securely packaged and shipped via UPS to winning bidders upon receipt of payment.

NSL Web Site Averages 10,000 Hits Per Month

The National Sporting Library's web site at www.nsl.org receives an average of 10,000 hits per month. Visitors to the site find a wealth of information about the library's collection, news, events and services.

Even those who cannot make the trip to Middleburg can easily browse the Library's card catalog from across the continent or around the world. Response has been favorable via telephone and e-mail.

The left-hand column on the home page displays the index to navigate the web site. Visitors can click on the topic they wish to view and read the Library's mission statement, policy on donating books to the NSL, policy on bidding in the Duplicate Book Sale, or find a mem-



bership form to print and mail to the Library. Even directions to the Library are posted.

With the 2001 Duplicate Book Sale catalog now in the mail to members, the entire catalog will be posted on the web at the end of

September. Web browsers all over the world may view the contents of the sale, but all bidders must become an NSL member in order to bid.

The "Book of the Month" feature has displayed a variety of books available in the NSL's collection. The August book was *The Yellow Earl*. This fascinating biography of Hugh Lowther, 5th Earl of Lonsdale (1857-1944) described the life of one of the sporting world's most colorful figures of the 19th- or 20th-centuries.

The Links page lists a host of web links to organizations, libraries, museums, sporting book-sellers and more. If you wish to add your web site, click on "E-Mail the Webmaster" with your request.

Thrill of the Hunt

Continued from page 3

Beverly Carter, Mr. Mellon's long-time administrative assistant, commissioned Lloyd to paint a portrait of Sea Hero. She wished to present the finished painting to Mr. Mellon as a birthday gift. Mr. Kelly proceeded to study the horse in various settings and capture the scenes in a series of watercolor sketches. He then presented the sketchbook to Ms. Carter to select the one sketch upon which the original painting would be based. Ms. Carter was so taken with the quality and overall ambiance of the whole sketchbook,

she decided to give the entire sketchbook as the birthday gift, in place of a more formal finished painting. Apparently Mr. Mellon was as thrilled with the series of sketches as Ms. Carter, and he decided to have the sketchbook reproduced in a small bound book he would give as personal gifts that year.

Mr. Kelly told me he thinks only a handful of the books were made. He said he personally has been called on twice to testify in divorce proceedings regarding the book's value. I'll consider my \$35 for a book fought

over by lawyers as money well spent.

And before all the hate mail rolls in about exploiting a child for profit, I just want you to know Miss Kelsie will inherit this book someday, and I only hope she gets half as much enjoyment from it as I have. We all know the saying "you can't judge a book by its cover," but in your future travels don't forget its corollary, "you can't judge a book by where you find it."

Abel Smith, Johnson Join NSL Board

The Board of Directors of the National Sporting Library recently elected two new members: Mimi Abel Smith and Sheila Johnson.

Mimi Abel Smith serves on the boards of the Washington International Horse Show, Upperville Horse and Colt Show

and the Piedmont Environmental Council, among others. She breeds and races Thoroughbred racehorses. She and her husband, John William Abel Smith, reside at Hickory Tree Farm near Middleburg.

Sheila Johnson owns Salamander Farm, a hunter/jumper establish-

ment, based in Middleburg and in Wellington, Fla. She is a member a number of community service and horse show boards and is a major sponsor of AHSA Junior Jumper events. Her daughter, Paige Johnson, is a familiar figure in AHSA hunter and junior jumper classes.

The NSL and the Yellow Earl

The National Sporting Library's F. Ambrose Clark Rare Book Room holds over 2,000 books, which includes the collection of 300 books that once belonged to Hugh Lowther, Fifth Earl of Lonsdale. Part of his collection was donated to the NSL in 1975 by the Arundel Foundation, founded by Russell Arundel (1902-1978) who was once MFH of Warrenton Hunt (Va.). The remainder of the collection was donated by Marjorie S. Arundel in April 2000.

Lonsdale seems far from the literary type as he lived life as fully as possible. Born into wealth in 1857, his name was readily associated with the highest echelons of sport and scandal. Because of this, he was an immensely popular figure among the working class and Victorian Society.

Peter Winants, director emeritus of the NSL, writes in the *NSL Newsletter*, Summer 1997: "The sport of foxhunting often attracts powerful, colorful and eccentric leaders. None can hold a candle though to Hugh Cecil Lowther, the fifth Earl of Lonsdale. Lowther lived life to the hilt. In his own oft-used phrase, it was 'lovely fun.' His fun included masterships of three

of England's top hunts - the Quorn, Cottesmore and Woodland Pytchley."

His marriage to Lady Grace Gordon suffered at times due to his often egregious behavior—spending extravagant amounts of money that the trustees of the Lowther estate struggled to control—and his affairs with Lily Langtry and Violet Cameron. But Grace was the anchor in his robust life. They remained husband and wife, in fact quite loyal to one another, throughout their lives.

Hugh and Grace had no children due to a fall she suffered in the hunt field while pregnant with their first child. The child was lost and she was unable to conceive after that. Therefore, Hugh decided that he was the last of the Lowthers and would spend his money accordingly.

Despite his faults, Hugh established a well-founded reputation for good sportsmanship and fairness. He wielded strong influence in the world of boxing. The sport in his early days was illegal in England. Hugh and his associates gradually cleaned up the sport, discouraging the ruffians that arrived for each match. Eventually through their ef-

forts, rules were established and the sport became legal.

The local farmers came to greatly appreciate Hugh during his master- ships. The hunts, to which powerful men belonged, often ran roughshod over the farmers' land with little regard to the farmers' crops and livestock. Through his iron will, Hugh disciplined the field and was influential in how the huntsmen hunted their hounds. This of course caused hard feelings within the hunts, but the landowners rallied to support him when he considered resigning his mastership.

Hugh had written a letter to his huntsman relating his philosophy of how hounds should be hunted. This letter is in the back of the biography, *The Yellow Earl*, by Donald Sutherland. He also corresponded with Harry Worcester Smith, MFH of Grafton Hunt(Mass.) on protocol in the hunt field. These letters, along with news clippings on Lonsdale, are in the NSL's Harry Worcester Smith archive collection.

On your next visit to the Library, look for Lonsdale's portrait hanging in the stairway leading to the Forrest E. Mars, Sr. Exhibition Hall where a sampling of books from the rare book room are on display.

The Chairman's Council

These friends of the National Sporting Library have taken a leadership role in their support of the Library by joining the Chairman's Council:

Mr. and Mrs. William Abel Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Arundel
John L. Ayers
Mr. and Mrs. William Backer
Thomas M. Beach, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Zohar Ben-Dov
Magalen O. Bryant
Elizabeth Busch Burke
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Calder
Mr. and Mrs. Rodion Cantacuzene
Mr. and Mrs. Finn M. W. Caspersen
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Cheatham, III
Jane Forbes Clark
Mr. and Mrs. W. Carey Crane, III
Mr. and Mrs. Paul D. Cronin
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Daniels
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory M. Dubenitz
Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Duke
Edward P. Evans
Mr. and Mrs. Bertram Firestone
Dr. Mary Fleming Finlay
Mr. and Mrs. Paul R. Fout
John H. Fritz
Nicole H. Perry
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin H. Graham

Helen K. Groves
Mr. and Mrs. Ted Guarriello
Bill H. Gunn
Virginia Gunnell
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Hardaway, III
James L. Hatcher, Jr.
Ingrid M. Hinckley
Hon. Amo Houghton, Jr.
Mrs. George A. Horkan, Jr.
Sam Huff
Mr. and Mrs. Manuel H. Johnson
Dr. and Mrs. Edward B. MacMahon
Peter Manigault
Jacqueline B. Mars
Mrs. Paul Mellon
Mrs. James P. Mills
Col. and Mrs. Robert W. Newton
Barnaby A. Ohrstrom
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Ohrstrom
Mr. and Mrs. Clarke Ohrstrom
G. F. Ohrstrom
Jacqueline Ohrstrom
Mrs. Ricard Ohrstrom
Lorian Peralta-Ramos
Frederick H. Prince

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rathbun
Dr. and Mrs. F. Turner Reuter
Mr. and Mrs. F. Turner Reuter, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Robin D. Roberts
David and Catherine Rochester
B. Francis Saul, II
Mildred Fletcher Slater
Gordon G. Smith
Robert H. Smith
William Steinkraus
Mead Stone
George Strawbridge, Jr.
SunTrust
Mr. and Mrs. Phillip S. Thomas
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Y. Tomlinson
John von Stade
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald L. Warren
Margaret R. White
Mr. and Mrs. S. Bonsal White
Mrs. Charles S. Whitehouse
Mrs. James Wiley
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen M. Wolf
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Zakroff
John R. Zugschwert

LIBRARY HOURS

Monday: 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday – Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Weekends by appointment



THE NATIONAL SPORTING LIBRARY

102 The Plains Road
Post Office Box 1335
Middleburg, Virginia 20118-1335

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 8
MIDDLEBURG VA

Return Service Requested